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INFO RUESBG/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4866
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*Colombia/Venezuela
Border*

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PBOR PLOS
SUBJ: COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN TALKS ON TERRITORIAL DISPUTE RESUME

REF: 79 CARACAS 9984

1. THE TALKS BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA AIMED AT RESOLVING THE DISPUTE OVER THE GULF OF VENEZUELA AREA RESUMED IN PUERTO LA CRUZ, VENEZUELA JANUARY 21 AND ARE SLATED TO RUN THROUGH FEBRUARY 2. HEADS OF BOTH DELEGATIONS HAVE CAUTIONED THE PRESS AGAINST EXPECTING A FINAL AGREEMENT IN THIS ROUND BUT HAVE SAID THE TALKS ARE GOING WELL. THE NEXT ROUND WILL TAKE PLACE IN COLOMBIA -- DATE AND PLACE TO BE DETERMINED, ONCE THE RESULTS OF THE CURRENT TALKS ARE ANALYZED IN THE RESPECTIVE CAPITALS.
2. KEEPING VERY MUM AND AVOIDING PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO ONE APPROACH OR OTHER, THE NEGOTIATORS NONETHELESS HAVE ADMITTED TO THE PRESS THAT AMONG THE OPTIONS BEING DISCUSSED ARE: JOINT ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISPUTED AREAS; --JOINT PARTICIPATION IN THE FRUITS OF THE DISCOVERIES MADE BY EITHER COUNTRY IN THE AREAS; AND, OF COURSE, --FINAL DELIMITATION OF THE ZONES WITH EACH COUNTRY DEVELOPING EXCLUSIVELY WHAT IS FOUND IN ITS AREA.
3. MEANTIME, BACK IN CARACAS, THE VENEZUELAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF HISTORY, NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, HAS WADED INTO THE QUESTION WITH A STUDY, GOING BACK TO THE COLONIAL PERIOD, DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH VENEZUELA'S CLAIM TO THE DISPUTED TERRITORY. THIS DEVELOPMENT, DEPENDING ON WHAT SHAPE AN AGREEMENT MIGHT TAKE, MAY POSE SOME PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS FOR THE GOV IF A POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT ENTAILS THE LOSS OF WHAT SOME MIGHT CONSIDER INDISPUTABLY VENEZUELAN TERRITORY.

LUERS

END OF MESSAGE

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